FEMALE VIRTUES:

A

POEM.

" Formam quidem ipſam, et tanquam faciem honeſti vides: quæ ſi oculis
" cerneretur, mirabiles amores excitaret."

TULL. OFFIC.

" You behold the very ſhape and countenance, as it were, of Virtue;
" which if it could be made the object of ſight, would excite in us
" a wonderful love."

ADDISON.

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The ARGUMENT.

Introductory addreſs. Subject propoſed. Viſion. Deſcription of the temple of Virtue. Modeſty deſcribed. The praiſes of marriage. The happineſs of a modeſt woman, contraſted with the condition of one that has been ſeduced. The deſcription of Truth; her ſuperiority over Deceit. The appearance of Cheerfulneſs. Ode to Cheerfulneſs. Induſtry deſcribed. Ill effects of indolence and luxury. The life of a village-girl. The various purſuits in which women of rank might employ their time with amuſement and advantage. Concluſion.

FEMALE VIRTUES.

FAR hence be all the votaries of Vice,
And wanton Venus, they whoſe guilty hours
Roll on in ſenſual revelry, eſtrang'd
From cool reflection: not for them the bard
Attunes his moral uncorrupted lay:
But you, oh Virgins! in whoſe purer breaſts
The heavenly ſpark of virtue chaſtely glows,
To you I ſing; O! may your wiſh'd applauſe

Crown all my labours, while I raiſe the verſe
In Virtue's praiſe, and add an humble wreath
To her neglected ſhrine: and chiefly thou,
Eliza, bleſt with ev'ry winning grace
To charm the eye of Reaſon and of Love,
Attend a brother's lay, whoſe myſtic muſe
Shews female Virtue in her nobleſt form,
And boldly tears the cunning veil that ſhrouds
The foul aſpect of vice. Me though my fate
Has doom'd to tread the mazy paths of law,
Far, far, alas! remov'd from peace and thee;
*Yet ſtill my ſoul with eager ſpeed delights
To burſt the bars of ſpace, and back return

* ——— Tamen iſtuc mens animuſque
Fert et amat ſpatiis obſtantia rumpere clauſtra.
Hor. Epiſt. Lib. i. 14.

To thee and to the muſe, who deign'd t' inſpire
My feeble tongue ere childhood ſcarce had left
My tender years, and with whoſe impulſe now
This glowing heart expands; then ſilent liſt'
While fancy pours the allegoric' lay.

* Cool was the evening, when with liſtleſs eaſe
Beſide a moſsgrown brook, that murm'ring flow'd
Along the freſhen'd mead, I laid me down;
And while the Cambrian mountains craggy heights,
The low-brow'd rocks beneath, the ſmiling vale,
The upland hamlet, and the humble ſpire

* The ſcene of the following viſion is laid in Wales, a country peculiarly adapted to inſpire romantic ideas: indeed thoſe remains of Welſh poetry which are not mere enthuſiaſtic rhapſodies in praiſe of their chiefs, are as replete with allegorical flights of imagination, as either the Italian poets, or their imitator Spenſer.

That decks the neighbouring village I beheld,
Careleſsly muſing on the various ſcenes
Which nature ſpread before me, balmy ſleep
O'erhung my eyelids, and its influence ſoft
O'erwhelm'd in dead repoſe all former thoughts.
Then to my mental view a ſcene aroſe,
Whoſe viſionary form ſo deep engrav'd
Within my ſoul remains, that ne'er till then
When memory itſelf ſhall ſink in death,
Should I forget the tenor of that dream.
Whether the ſylvan genius oft' of old
By Druids hoar' with powerful ſpells invok'd,
And midnight melody of melting harps,
Beneath the gloomy ſhade of aged oaks,
To aid the cauſe of freedom; whether he
Inſpir'd my fancy, or the gameſome band

*Of lightly-tripping fairies, on the marge
Of that ſweet ſtream by which I ſlumb'ring lay
In merry dances joining, to my ſenſe'
Th' illuſive ſhadow rais'd, it little boots
With fruitleſs care to ſearch: and yet whate'er
The friendly ſp'rit, my gratitude he claims
For pleaſure and inſtruction it convey'd.

Methought an aged form before me ſtood,
And waving 'round my head an ebon wand,
My trembling hand ſhe took, and led me on
Through many a rugged path to the broad baſe
Of a tremendous mountain, ſteep th' aſcent,

* The exiſtence of fairies, genii, or ſupernatural beings, that viſit the earth, is a received notion both in Wales, and in the highlands of Scotland. Vid. Johnſon's Tour to the Hebrides.

Steep as * Plinlimmon, or th' † Herculean rock
From whence the Britiſh thunder o'er the ſeas
With flaming fury whirling, deep o'erwhelm'd
The pride of Spain, whilſt at the dread uproar
Aſtoniſh'd Neptune from his ſhaken throne
Started with terror: Up the craggy ſides
Of this black precipice with painful ſteps
We ſlowly mov'd, yet oft' my ſpirits ſunk,
And my weak limbs o'erwearied with the toil
Of length'ning wilds, the ſummit ne'er had reach'd,
But that my ſage conductreſs with ſoft balms,
And cheering words, through all my feeble frame
New life infus'd; at length with joy I view'd
Where on the mountain's height a wondrous pile

* *Plinlimmon*, a mountain in Wales.

† Th' *Herculean Rock*, Gibraltar.

High

High rear'd its cloudtopt head; maſſy the walls
Of Adamantine ſtrength, encircling wide
The ſacred fane of virtue, the broad gates
With bars of ſolid rock were clos'd, to force
Impregnable or guile; but at the touch
Of that all-powerful wand, open they flew
As if inſtinct with motion: to my ſight
In all the blaze of ſplendor ſtood diſplay'd
The glorious temple: vaſt it ſeem'd, the work
Of no terreſtrial architect, for not
Of cedar, or of marble was it form'd;
Nor like that haughty palace erſt poſſeſt
By rich Peruvia's monarch Montezume,
O'erlaid with burniſh'd gold, and glittering gems:
This fabrick was celeſtial; perfect, pure
From earthy droſs, the lucid pavement ſhone

Like a cryſtálline ſea; while all around
High tow'ring columns rear'd their beamy heads,
Magnificently bright; the lofty dome
Glow'd like the clear expanſe of bluſhing heav'n,
When through the azure clouds his flaming form
The mid-day ſun in full effulgence rears.
Midſt all th' empyrean glory was the throne
Of virtue, there in awful ſtate ſublime
The goddeſs ſate; but not to mortal eyes
Reveal'd, ſo thick the ambient clouds inſhrin'd
Her angel form, yet oft' methought her charms
Burſt with ſuperior luſtre through the flood
Of circling radiance: at the ſudden ſight
Of ſuch tranſcendent beauty, fixt I ſtood
In mute aſtoniſhment; through every vein
Thrill'd pleaſure mixt with dread, as when of old

(So

*(So Spenſer ſings) the Elfin prince withdrew
The fatal veil from that inchanted ſhield
Whoſe ſunlike orb confuſion and diſmay
On all beholders blaz'd; ſo powerful,
But with a milder influence was the force
Of Virtue's heav'nly charms: long time I gaz'd
(For that ſage matron who firſt led me on,
Had arm'd with eagle's ſtrength the viſual ray,
Elſe had my eyes been blaſted with exceſs
Of light, and ſunk in darkneſs and amaze):
Long time I gaz'd; mean while a ſolemn ſound
Of deep-ton'd muſic through the vaulted roofs
Echoing, with ſacred inſpiration breath'd
High ſoaring thoughts, and almoſt ſeem'd to draw

* See the Deſcription of this Shield, and of Prince Arthur, Spenſer's Fairy Queen, Book I. Cant. VII. St. 33.

My liſt'ning ſoul from out this mortal coil,*
And waft it up to heaven; ſo ſtrong the ſtrains
Yet ſo extatically ſweet, methought
A choir of ſeraphs from th' ambroſial realms
Of endleſs bliſs deſcending, here had rais'd
Celeſtial raptures from their palm-wreath'd harps.
At length it ceas'd, but ſtill the accents loſt
In dying murmurs floated on the air,
And ſoftly ſunk in ſilence: deep entranc'd
In pure delight was every ſenſe; when, lo!
A train approach'd, more lovely than the nymphs
† That grac'd Eurotas' bank, or the rough cliffs

* "When we have ſhuffled off this mortal coil."
SHAKESPEARE'S Hamlet.

† Theſe places were the peculiar haunts of Diana and her train: it was in the vale of Gargaphia that Actæon was transformed into a ſtag for having by accident ſeen that goddeſs as ſhe was bathing. See Ovid. Metam.

Of

Of ſhaggy Cynthus, or their dark retreat,
Gargaphia's ſhady vale; when from the chaſe
Returning, 'round their ſylvan queen they throng'd
With rural ſports; firſt came a lowly maid,
Whoſe ſpotleſs form a ſnow-white robe o'erſpread,
Such as of old the ſilent veſtal bore
In ſlow proceſſion moving 'round the ſhrine
*Of that great goddeſs, whoſe eternal fire
Gleam'd in her hallow'd hand; ſuch were the looks
Of ſacred Modeſty: the waving ſhade
Of a low ſpreading veil her face ſuffus'd;
But oft' the wanton-breathing breeze aſide
That ſlender tiſſue blew, then through her cheek

* The fire that was burnt in the temple of Veſta, was never ſuffered to be extinct; if by any accident it became ſo, it was relumed with fire extracted from the rays of the ſun, all other flames being conſidered as earthly and impure.

Quick flaſh'd the baſhful blood, and gentle ſighs
Upheav'd her ſwelling breaſt ; the cryſtal tear
Stood trembling in her eye, whoſe downcaſt glance
With innocence and virgin ſoftneſs beam'd.
Beſide her Hymen came with garlands crown'd,
In manly beauty graceful ; and a band
Of ſportive infants play'd around : nor here
Let any wonder that the jocund God
Of marriage, ſhould on modeſty attend :
For not alone the ſolitary haunts
Of celibacy ſad, the cloiſter's wall,
Where at the long-clos'd grate, o'ergrown with leaves
Of mournful ivy, with repentant ſighs
The pallid nun her cruel fate deplores :
Not theſe unſocial ſcenes alone, with pure
Untainted chaſtity of heart are bleſt ;

But o'er the couch of wedded conſtancy
Its heav'n-born influence is ſhed, and there
Sit modeſty and love, diffuſing round
Ineffable delight; then hail to thee,
Thou innate purity, the brighteſt gem
Of female virtues; Modeſty, all hail!
Secure in thee, her only real pride,
That lovely ſex, the faireſt and the beſt
Of the Creator's works, yet doom'd too oft
To fall a prey to man's inſidious arts;
Mocks the deceiver's toils, the deep-fetch'd ſigh,
The ogling leer, the ready vow, the drop
Forc'd ſparkling from the eye; ſecure in thee,
Not all the ſhocks of fortune can confound
Her ſteady ſoul: thence ſprings the only bliſs
That reaches to the heart: Ah! what avail

The glow of beauty, or the eaſy form
In artleſs elegance ſupreme, unleſs
Virtue, that greateſt, nobleſt ornament,
Crown every charm, and over every grace
A brighter grace diffuſe? thus, thus adorn'd,
In conſcious worth the fair one rears her head,
And ſtands diſplay'd the paragon of nature:
How different is her lot if once ſhe ſtray
From Virtue's arduous path! fallen her charms,
Fall'n is the generous ſenſe of honour, ſhame
O'erhangs her couch; in vain ſhe weeps, in vain
Too late deplores her error, while the thought
Of innocence now loſt, of fame, of friends
Diſgrac'd by her foul ruin, ſtings her ſoul.
Oh! whither ſhall ſhe fly? what ſolitude
Can hide her hapleſs head? where'er ſhe goes,

Report purſues her ſteps, and whiſpers 'round
With buſy care the tale of her diſhonour.
Thoſe happier maids, companions of her youth,
Whoſe fond ſociety in converſe ſweet,
Or harmleſs ſports the thoughtleſs hours beguil'd;
Turn from their once-lov'd friend with juſt diſdain:
Ev'n he, the wretch with whom in guilty joy
She loos'd the ties of virtue, even he,
The cauſe of all her miſery, no more
Enamour'd of thoſe charms, that beauteous form
Which erſt with rapt'rous fondneſs he ador'd,
Ungrateful now, and ſenſeleſs to her love,
With cold excuſes leaves, or loathing flies
The wretched outcaſt, never to return!
Haply when thus deſerted, thus forlorn,
By all that once were kind, no friendly care

To ſooth her anguiſh, no fond parent's hand
With ſympathetic grief to wipe away
The bitter tear, warm guſhing from the heart:
Haply at this ſad hour, her fainting ſoul
May ſink ſurcharg'd beneath the load of woe,
Till ſlowly pining, like a faded roſe
That drops oppreſſed by the ſtorm, ſhe falls
In ſilent ſorrow to th' oblivious grave.
Or while with fixed thought, her brooding mind
In ſullen anguiſh muſes on her fate,
Phrenzy may fire her brain, or fell deſpair
Seize on her ſoul, and (while the troubled blood
Flies through her trembling frame, and back recoils
Startled at death) arm her ſelf-murd'ring rage
With the keen dagger's point; while whiſp'ring fiends
Malicious ſmiling at all human pangs,

*Urge the dread ſtroke that hurls her to perdition,
Irrevocably hurls; O! ſacred powers!
Ev'n at that inſtant may ſome cherub, borne
On wings of heav'nly mercy, ſwift deſcend,
Hold her uplifted arm, and hurl to hell
The baleful Dæmon that diſtracts her ſoul.

Next came a virgin, on whoſe awful brow
Sat dignity and honour; o'er her head
A plumed helmet ſparkled, and a ſpear
Wav'd in her hand; o'er all her boſom ſhone
An adamantine breaſt-plate: thus array'd
With gait majeſtic moving, Truth appear'd

* If this deſcription of a woman that has fallen the victim of ſeduction, ſhould appear too highly coloured, let the reader remember, that a more delicate picture would not excite a proper degree of horror, and that the concatenation of miſeries attendant on vice, cannot be rendered too ſhocking and deteſtable.

Like ſome immortal ſpirit ſent to ſtrike
The traitor's heart with fear, or from his throne
To daſh the proud uſurper, and befriend
The cauſe of juſtice, o'er the rout of war
Brooding ſerene, unruffled, undiſmay'd.

Oh! how ſhall I with feeble accents dare
To ſing of Truth; how raiſe the ſwelling verſe
To grandeur worthy ſo ſublime a theme?
Hence vile Deceit; and thou, fly ſmooth-tongued fiend,
Hypocriſy, who maſk'd in Virtue's garb
Creep'ſt like the ſerpent into friendſhip's heart,
And after ſting'ſt it; hence with the foul ſpells
Of fawning Flattery; that with glozing lies
Deluſive ſmiles, and while ſhe ſmiles extends
The poiſon'd cup; and Scandal, baleful nurſe

Of Falſehood, whoſe keen dart with winged ſpeed
Strikes at unguarded innocence; and thou,
Malicious Envy, on whoſe cank'red heart
Eternal vipers prey, whoſe bitter tears
Bewail the good of others: hence, avaunt!
Ye miſcreant train! ne'er may your venom taint
The female mind, there ſtill let candour dwell,
And ſweet ſincerity, with juſt contempt
Of all thoſe deſpicable arts which mark
The grov'ling mind; then ſcorn to ſhed the tear
Of feigned ſorrow, ſcorn th' affected ſwoon,
The ſudden ſickneſs, and the ready lie,
Though prompted by convenience, or the dread
Of ſhame, and wrath parental; rather bear
The tranſient frown, ſubmit to be expos'd
To ſneering ridicule, than violate

The ſacred laws of truth: for ne'er ſo mean,
So far degraded from reſpect appears
The ſofter ſex, as when the guilty bluſh
Of baſe, detected falſehood, ſtains their cheek:
Then mutual confidence is loſt; no more
Attention greets their ſpeech: o'er every deed,
O'er every caſual word, with dubious look
Suſpicion hangs, and miſinterprets all.

But ſee with ſprightly ſtep, and eaſy air,
Yon' lovely form approaching; o'er her limbs
A roſy colour'd mantle looſely flows,
Graceful in negligence; her count'nance ſmiles
With pleaſure temper'd by a ſoft reſerve,
Unmixt with ſpleen or pride; her dewy lips
Are ting'd in ſweetneſs; 'round her joyful wait

The graces, and with fadeleſs amaranth
Her wildly-waving treſſes lightly deck.
Meanwhile methought they rais'd the tuneful voice
And loudly caroll'd to the lively ſound
Of harps, that blended with the warbling lute.

*Oh! gentle power, whoſe genial ray
Diffuſing o'er the tranquil ſoul,
Like the eternal orb of day,
Illumes and purifies the whole:
Oh! Cheerfulneſs! thy joy ſerene
Not mid the pomp of ſtate is ſeen,
Not where Guilt ſtarts with conſcious dread,
Or proud Ambition rears her high-aſpiring head.

* The following ode is in the ſame meaſure as Gray's Ode to Adverſity.

For

For o'er the victor's bloody wreath,
O'er the rich halls of luxury,
Couch pale Diſeaſe, and ghaſtly Death,
And ſhake the ſhaft of miſery:
But only they, the wiſer few
That Virtue's ſilent vale purſue,
Can taſte the calm content repoſe,
The balmy peace of mind, which Cheerfulneſs beſtows.

Thou, when that great creative word
Which check'd the elemental ſtrife,
(Whoſe thrilling ſound confuſion heard)
Call'd forth dull matter into life;
Then thou wert form'd, thy purer flame
Was breath'd into the human frame,
The jarring paſſions to controul,
To ſooth each keener pang, and harmonize the ſoul.

At ſight of thy enchanting ſmile,
Each envious ſpectre ſhrieking flies;
Pale Slavery forgets his toil,
Grief and Pain ſuppreſs their ſighs;
Hatred quits the ranc'rous mood,
Revenge no longer pants for blood;
Smooth'd is the wrinkled brow of Care,
And clos'd the fiery eye of ſenſe-bereft Deſpair.

Hark! heard ye not yon' Lydian * lyre
Sweetly melting in the air?

* The Lydian muſic was extremely ſoft and melodious, calculated either to create ſenſual deſires, and enervate the purer faculties, or to raiſe the moſt indecent mirth and revelry: thus Spenſer, in deſcribing "*Caſtle "Joyous:*"

"And all the while ſweet muſic did divide
"Her looſer notes with *Lydian* harmony."

And Dryden:

"Softly ſweet in *Lydian* meaſures
"Soon he ſooth'd his ſoul to pleaſures."

Dance, and Glee, and gay Deſire
The glad approach of Mirth declare;
Pleaſure ſparkles in her eye,
Sports o'er all her boſom fly,
Roſy Cupids 'round her move,
And every feature glows with warm delight and love.

But ſoon th' exulting ſcene is o'er.—
The burſting laugh, the wanton jeſt,
The merry lay, are heard no more,
All, all are ſunk in ſullen reſt!
Tranſient as the lightning's glare,
Quick flaſhing through the gloomy air:
No more the face of Mirth * appears,
But Sorrow, frowning form! her faded viſage rears.

* "I have always preferred cheerfulneſs to mirth. The latter I conſider "as an act, the former as a habit of the mind. Mirth is ſhort and tran- "ſient, cheerfulneſs fixed and permanent. Thoſe are often raiſed into "the greateſt tranſports of mirth, who are ſubject to the greateſt depreſ- "ſions of melancholy." ADDISON.

Then

Then, Goddeſs! o'er the female heart
Thy mild attemper'd influence ſhed;
That ſoft complacency impart,
Which crowns with bliſs the nuptial bed:
For weak is Youth or Beauty's ſway,
The ſhortliv'd triumph of a day;
Thy changeleſs charms alone can bind
In chains of conſtant love man's ever wav'ring mind.

Thus ſung they, breathing melody, the while
O'er many a vocal ſtring their fingers flew.

Next Induſtry appear'd, the bluſh of health
Bloom'd on her downy cheek, around her locks
In jetty ringlets cluſt'ring, was enwreath'd
A roſeate garland; beautiful and young

She ſeem'd, as Hebe, or * Pomona, when
Beneath the ſhady elm by curling vines
Luxuriantly embrac'd, Vertumnus woo'd
The half-reluctant nymph; o'er every part
A decent elegance its ſimple grace
Diffus'd: how far beyond the reach of art,
That with a meretricious, gaudy glare
Of trifling ornament, o'erwhelms the limbs,
And ſtains with pois'nous tints the native hue!

Ere luxury began, induſtrious toil
Rous'd the quick-flowing blood, the vernal breeze
Inſpired ſpirits light, and the keen edge
Of appetite, though homely were the cheer,
Unfetch'd from India's clime with ſpicy heat

* See the 14th Book of Ovid's Metam.

T'excite

T'excite the ſluggiſh taſte; then were not known
The lazy ſpleen, or vapours, and the brood
Of fancied ſickneſs, that affect the nerves
Of modern females; ſuch are the effects
Of indolence: then who would idly waſte
This little ſpace of life, this fleeting ſcene,
Wrapt in a liſtleſs lethargy that creeps
With gradual influence o'er every ſenſe?
Soon droops the vigour of the ſoul, oppreſs'd,
Nor longer dares with ſeraph' wing attempt
To reach her native heav'n; no noble thoughts
Pervade the lifeleſs maſs; then watchful Vice,
Couch'd like "the ſerpent at the ear of Eve," *
Soft whisp'ring tempts to guilt: alas! too oft
Her ſyren ſong prevails, too oft the mind

* See Milton, Book IV. Paradiſe Loſt.

Unbent on good purſuits, with raſh delight
Inhales th' alluring poiſon, till it ſink
Deep to the heart, and ſoon pollute the whole.

Thrice happy is the lowly village-maid
Who far remov'd from grandeur, and the pomp
Of gorgeous courts, among her native plains
In cheerful labour dwells: what though obſcure
Her lot, to Fame and Flattery unknown?*
What though with midnight rout, the gilded band
Of giddy Diſſipation ne'er diſturb'd
Her humble cott'? yet whiterob'd Innocence,
And pure Simplicity reign there, and bleſs
With health, and peaceful thoughts, and reſt ſecure,
Her guileleſs boſom; her the op'ning morn
Blithſome and freſh, with early melody

* "A youth, to fortune and to fame unknown." GRAY's Elegy.

Of

Of blackbird, or the lark's loud echoing note
Wakens, when firſt the purple-ſtreaked ſky
Gleams through the woodbine that with wanton wreaths
O'erſhades her window: whether the throng'd herd
Impatient lowing, to the dewy field
Call her, or ſwarming bees, or youthful flow'rs,
Gay progeny of Spring, demand her care
To rear their tender ſhoots; or ripen'd hay
Sweet breathing o'er the mead; or where along
The plenteous landſcape, like a ſea of gold
The laughing harveſt waves: there a briſk throng
Of ruddy youths with hearty kindneſs greet
Her coming, and when ſultry toil is o'er,
The ruſtic feaſt beneath the ſpreading oak,
Or hawthorn hedge, with ſportive merriment
Abounds, till Evening grey with ſilent ſtep

Moves o'er the duſky hill; then home ſhe hies,
Led by her favourite ſwain, where lightſome Sleep
Waves gently o'er her head his downy wings,
And ſlumbers ſoft inſpires. But ye who born
To grace a higher ſphere, whom bounteous fate
Exempts from menial toil, to you each Muſe,
Each nobler art her ample ſtores diſplays,
All, all invite to quit the ſhameful couch
Of ſloth, and into bold exertion rouſe
The mental faculties; 'tis yours t'explore
The page of ſcience, and to trace the paths
Of hiſtory, where contemplation views
The fickle turns of Fortune, the dire fate
Of ancient Greece; or Rome, now tow'ring high
With more than regal pride; now fall'n, alas!
Fall'n from her glory, low in ruins laid,

Yet

Yet e'en in ruins great. 'Tis yours to bid
The well-touch'd picture breathe, or 'mid the ſcenes
Of heav'n-inſpired Shakeſpeare, thrill with fear,
Or join the comic laugh: in Milton's ſtrains
To ſoar beyond the ſphere of earth; or roam
With magic Spenſer through the mazy groves
Of vivid fancy; nor has fate denied
The female ſex, with genius high to pierce
Thro' dark oblivion's cloud: hark how the harp
Of *Sheridan awakes the very ſoul
Of ſweeteſt harmony! 'neath †Damer's hand,
With what a lively grace the marble glows!
And tender ‡Smith thy elegiac lays

* Mrs. Sheridan.

† Honourable Mrs. Damer.

‡ Mrs. Smith, authoreſs of "Elegiac Sonnets," &c.

To melting ſorrow move the plaintive ſtring,
While Poeſy herſelf enchanted liſts',
And drops a tear upon her fav'rite's lyre.

Then oh! ye fair, whether of humble birth
Or noble lineage ſprung, let ſome purſuit
Of ſolid uſe, or graceful elegance
Crown every hour with induſtry; for thus
No reſtleſs care, no pangs of conſcious guilt
Shall rend your breaſt; but peace and ſocial joy
Eternal ſolace ſhower.—Here let us ceaſe,
For now the ſun aſcending in the eaſt,
Glanc'd on my eyelids the bright beams of day;
I roſe, yet ſcarce awake, and wond'ring found
'Twas but a dream; no longer I beheld
The temple's ſplendour, or the bliſsful train

Of Virtues; all were vaniſh'd, like a cloud,
That ſlowly moving through the ſummer ſky,
Sudden diſſolves in unſubſtantial air.

How happy were the bard, who trembling ſees,
With fearful diffidence, the low'ring ſtorm
Whoſe fury may o'erwhelm this offspring weak
Of youthful fancy immature; how bleſt!
Could he indulge the fond, preſumptive thought,
That not the chilling frown of cold neglect,
Nor critic rage ſevere, would fiercely blaſt
His budding laurels, and deſtroy the hopes
Of riſing emulation! yet whate'er
His fate, with joy and conſcious pride he feels
That not to gloſs the loathſome form of Vice
With ſpecious words, and draw the tearful ſigh
From bluſhing innocence, he dar'd to raiſe

His honeſt lay: but 'neath the lively form
Of viſionary tales to blazon wide
The charms of female Virtue, to diſplay
The path of real happineſs; for this,
For this alone with vent'rous wing he ſoar'd
Beyond the vulgar ſphere of ignorance,
And dull obſcurity: May Virtue ſtill
Inſpire his muſe, and moralize his ſong!

FINIS.

315 P14